

Training Options

IDPs consist of both formal training and developmental work experiences. Developmental work experiences include on-the-job assignments and self-development activities.

Formal Training

- ◆ Instructor-led workshops
- ◆ Government/private sector courses
- ◆ Conferences/seminars

On-the-job Training

- ◆ Detail/rotational assignment
- ◆ Mentor/coach
- ◆ Shadowing a subject-matter expert
- ◆ Project/taskforce/committee
- ◆ Cross training
- ◆ Studying manuals/bulletins

Self-development Activities

- ◆ Independent reading
- ◆ Audio/video cassette programs and CDs
- ◆ Public speaking ("Toastmasters")
- ◆ Correspondence courses
- ◆ Community/civic activities
- ◆ Professional associations
- ◆ www.aglearn.usda.gov courses

For more information about IDPs and training options, contact:

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**United States Department of Agriculture
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration**

The Individual Development Plan



INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

FY 2013

KEEPING YOU ON TRACK

A ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

What is an Individual Development Plan?

An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a written schedule or plan which describes your particular goals for the future. It's a tool to help systematize your plans for training and experience so you can acquire the skills and knowledge you may need or desire.

Ideally, every year you and your supervisor will meet to discuss the goals and accomplishments for your individual development. The IDP gives you and your supervisor the opportunity to set objectives and plan learning experiences that support these objectives. This reduces the risk of spending time and money on activities that are not appropriate or applicable learning experiences.

What makes a goal?

A goal is something pertinent to your work and your career that you see as worthwhile to pursue--either improvement or mastery of some skill that would help you in your current job, a new responsibility in your current job, or another position. A goal should be realistic. It should require some work and challenge, but should not be set so high as to be unreachable.

How to identify KSAs

It is important to describe your developmental objectives on the IDP form--the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed. Once your KSAs are identified, even in rough form, you will be in a good position to decide on the right combination of formal courses and alternative training methods necessary to acquire those KSAs. *Identify KSAs this way:* (1) Jot down the basic duties or tasks involved in meeting the needs of your current or future job; (2) Select a particular task or duty on which to work; (3) Identify the competency; and (4) Break down the task into specific KSAs.

A 3-Step Process

Preparation

Prior to discussing your IDP with your supervisor, you should assess your strengths and weaknesses relative to your job requirements. Take the opportunity to consider your goals and how you see yourself in the organization. Identify your objectives and developmental opportunities to help you meet those objectives.

We learn best when training includes a variety of learning experiences. Consider the investment of time and money required for each experience and pursue several alternatives. A list of formal training opportunities and developmental work experiences is provided at the back of this brochure.

Meeting Your Supervisor

You and your supervisor should come to the meeting with rough ideas about your IDP. Your supervisor can help provide information on the Agency's long- and short-range plans, staffing needs, and the need for particular skills. You should discuss every aspect of the plan.

Your supervisor will consider workload, availability of funds, and the general relevance of the desired training to current or future official duties. This information will aid in devising a practical and feasible plan. Be prepared to provide alternatives if a desired developmental assignment or training course is not workable.

Retain a copy of your completed IDP. A copy is also placed in your performance file and a copy is sent to the Agency Training Office.

Implementation

Now begin the activities you outlined to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve your goals. It is your responsibility to follow through on the activity requests. Remember, the IDP is flexible. Unexpected situations can interfere with training plans, and events can arise that require unforeseen training. Modifications can be made based on the demands of your job and your desire for personal growth.